

# The Big Four: Rise Against Pitch

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Summary: The Big Four yet again has to defeat the likes of Pitch, but there's a catch. Hiccup has no memory of Merida, and only she, Rapunzel, and Jack know why. Pitch wants war and The Big Four gone, and he can only do so if Merida keeps her end of the deal, to keep her memory of her and Hiccup out of Hiccup's mind. Jackunzel x Mericcup.

## 1. Prologue

**\*\*The Big Four: Rise Against Pitch\*\***

**\*\*Prologue\*\***

"Where is he? Why can't we fin' him?" The redhead had shrieked, tears developing in her eyes as she stood strong with her bow and arrow. She searched for him everywhere, and yet her love was nowhere to be found.

"We'll find him, Mer, just have faith and don't give up searching." The princess of Corona tried all that she could to help Merida feel better, but there was only so much she could do. For hours the both of them searched on foot with the help of a Night Fury, and made no progress. The encounter they had with their nemesis, Pitch Black, turned into a fight that they didn't win, but ended up losing their fourth with darkness.

A gust of wind flew past the three as a young male's voice rang through their ears. "I can't find him anywhere. Who knows where Pitch had went with him. I went to the Guardians for help and they couldn't find any sight of him either." Jack had sat on Toothless as he spoke to the girls, disappointment in his face. Merida shook her head, stalking forward and not looking back.

"We need to fin' him. There is no way I will sleep tonight without findin' him. I'm not turnin' back." She continued forward until

Rapunzel had to step in front of her. "Merida," she pleaded, "Please just rest with us for a while. Hiccup is a strong, hard headed Viking-" Merida threw her hands up in the air as she interrupted the Corona princess; "But he can't fight wi'out his Night Fury! I don' care what ye and Jack do, I'm not givin' up. I will search all day an' night if I have to." The red on her face was as red ad her hair, and she meant every word as she pushed passed Rapunzel. Toothless was right behind Merida as they continued forward, leaving Jack and Rapunzel behind.

"What are we going to do, Jack? She won't listen to us and we're still trying what we can to find Hiccup." Rapunzel brushed her hand against her braid as she stared after Merida and the night fury, slowly walking behind them enough to give them their space. Jack sighed and kissed Rapunzel on her temple, walking the same pace as her. "Red is just worried, I'd be the same way she is acting if I were to lose you."

Merida continued on, her bow in hand and her arrows over her shoulder. Her dress ripped a little as she ignored the small branches from the trees clawing at her. She looked over at Toothless, who seemed as determined as her, but had a frightened and sad look in his eyes. She lightly scratched the scales on top of his head and spoke to him reassuringly, "We'll fin' him, bud. I know we-" Within a split second, she was gone. Toothless shrieked, Rapunzel and Jack ran right over and looked everywhere for the redhead.

\_Oi, what in the hell just happened to me?\_ She coughed and slowly got up, brushing off her dress and grabbing her bows. Looking around she noticed in front of her a small light, nothing like a wisp, but a light in the distance. \_Well, I might as well follow it.\_ She slowly walked through the tunnel towards the light, it shining brighter each moment she was closer. She gripped her bow in her hand and kept one of her arms ready to grab an arrow if she had to. The tunnel finally ended, and her eyes went wide. In front of her was the boy she loved, her body immediately running toward his as his body laid stiff on the ground. She put her head to his chest, a small but faint heartbeat and her eyes filled with tears. "Hiccup," she whispered to him, "Please don' let go of yer life. Please stay with me." She quietly pleaded to him, her head resting on his chest. A dark laughter came from behind her, and she immediately shot up and looked towards the direction it came from.

"Pitch." She spoke coldly, staring at him with cold eyes, hatred fluttering into his. He smiled at her, and spoke in a dark manner. "Dunbroch, I'm guessing you're here because of that dragon rider." He walked over to the other side of Hiccup, looking down at him and then up at the High Lands princess. "A trade, perhaps?"

Merida looked down at Hiccup, and all around the floor, searching for an answer. She finally looked up to Pitch with determination in her eyes. "My life in exchange for his?" A dark chuckle escaped Pitch's lips as he shook his head, looking at her with a small smile. "Oh, I don't want you dead, princess. You'll have to do better than that." Her face was full of confusion, but at the same time determination. She swore to herself to do whatever it would take to free Hiccup, and make him okay. She loved him that much to do so. She stood there strongly, listening to Pitch's request as he stared down at the viking.

"The boy will be fine. He'll live a long and healthy life, grow up to be Chief of his clan, die of old age." Merida stared coldly at Pitch, knowing there was a catch to his speech. "You, however," He spoke coldly, a smile upon his lips and he turned to look at her; "He won't remember." The princess felt something break inside of her. \_Won't remember me?\_ She tried not to show the hurt in her face as she stood up to Pitch, listening to him. "I will erase every single memory he has of you in his head. And he will despise you. But he'll live." \_What do I do?\_ She looked down at Hiccup, her face showing her strength, but her eyes showing weakness. She fought with herself, whether or not to live with knowing Hiccup is alive, but hates her, or having him die right in front of her. She studied Hiccup one last time, the only time she will remember him or ever see him again. The scar on his chin, his freckles, his shaggy hair. She loved every bit of him but he wouldn't remember her. "So," He spoke softly, staring directly at her, "do we have a deal?" She sucked in a breath, blinked to fight back the tears, and looked at Pitch with no emotion but pride. "Do it." And everything went black.

## 2. Chapter 1: Five Years

Darkness filled her mind. There were no dreams, just darkness. That's all she ever had for the last five years of her life. Dreams didn't exist to her, only nightmares. One particular nightmare occurred almost every night, with that same dark figure with that blackened voice. "So, do we have a deal?"

Snow covered her face as she was hit with a snowball, waking her up abruptly and sitting up on her bed, looking around until her eyes laid upon the icy figure by her window. "Well, don't you look wonderful this morning, Red." His smile as white as snow lit up her bedroom. Scowling, she laid herself back down and pulled the covers over her head. "Whad'ya want, Frost?" She spoke into her pillow, closing her eyes and trying to forget about the nightmare she relived.

Jack flew over to her bed, sitting down on the edge of it as he tapped her with his staff. "I wanted to see how you were, and wake you up before you scream again." Merida frowned under the covers and let out a soft sigh before sitting up on her bed and removing the covers from her face. Dark circles covered her eyes, showing that she did not have any sleep for the past few days, or years. Jack frowned a little when he saw her, shaking his head slightly. "Well, you've had better days."

A small smirk came over Merida's lips, her shoulders shrugging lightly. "An' nights. But there ain' much I can do about it." She slowly got herself out of bed, brushing off her nightgown and walking over towards her wardrobe. She opened it up and sighed, looking at her dresses and trying to find one. "So.. How is he?" She spoke quietly, staring at the dress she patched up years ago. Merida felt a cool breeze next to her and yet her eyes wouldn't move away from the dress. "Be honest." She whispered to her frozen friend.

"He's.. Hiccup. Flying around on Toothless, trying to patch up Berk, being the youngest Chief in viking history is really getting to him." He looked down as he spoke and raised his eyes to look at Merida, who's eyes were full of sadness and glossy from the tears that filled them. "Well," she spoke softly, "A'least he's doing alright." She

grabbed the dress and turned to look at Jack. "I need to spend time alone today, Jack. I don't want to be bothered much today, if that's alright with ye." Jack nodded slowly, walking over to the window and turning to look at her once more. "I'm here for you, Red. Remember that." She gave him a small smile of appreciation before he went away with the wind.

Merida's hands swept over the patches of her torn dress from that day in the forest when she was searching for Hiccup. Somewhere, deep inside of her, she had faith that maybe one day Hiccup's mind would come to a sense and remember her; then she remembered Pitch's words. Fear struck inside of her as she remembered what he had said, he'll despise you. Merida's heart tore once more as she remembered those words. She took in a deep breath and let it out slowly, getting herself dressed into his gown so she could go on an adventure with her beloved horse Angus.

It was like any other day for Hiccup. Flying through the air on his beloved Night Fury, letting go of the worries and troubles of others in his tribe. He was now Chief of Berk, his father passing so suddenly was hard on Hiccup and his mother Valka, as well as the tribe. Deep down inside, he knew his father would want the best in him. His mind was lost in his thoughts before a cold chill came between him and Toothless. "You alright, bud?" He had spoke as he pet his Night Fury friend.

"Well he should be because I didn't freeze the both of you," Jack had chuckled, sitting on his staff as he flew next to Hiccup and Toothless. Hiccup shook his head, taking off his mask and looking over at Jack with an annoyed, but amused, look. "Easy for you to say. Toothless does better with the cold than me." Jack threw his head back and laughed, shaking his head and smiling at Hiccup. "That's true. So, what's going on with Berk today?"

Hiccup sighed, running his fingers through his hair and staring down at the village below him. "I don't know, Jack. It's been three months since my dad has been gone, and I still don't know what I'm doing." He and Toothless landed on a small island next to Berk, but far enough so Hiccup was able to talk to Jack. "I feel that I can't do any better than what I have done. My dad knew what to do, and I have no clue." Hiccup hopped off of Toothless and sat on the edge of the island, looking over Berk and watching everyone's moves. "Astrid makes a much better Chief than I do." He whispered to himself.

Jack sat himself next to Hiccup, over looking Berk and observing everyone. "Well, you did make peace with dragons and vikings, isn't that enough?" Jack looked over at Hiccup, who was confused and stressed as he watched his tribe. Hiccup shook his head, slowly getting up and pacing around the small island. "I don't know, Jack. I know that it was, but my father needs me to do so much more on Berk and I don't know where to begin." Suddenly an unknown dragon rider appeared out of the sky, and flew towards Berk. Hiccup watched the dragon rider and immediately put himself on Toothless and flew quickly back to Berk, Jack following behind him.

Hiccup and Toothless landed in front of the dragon rider, who stepped down from his dragon and faced them. "I am looking for the Chief of Berk," the rider had spoken with a raspy voice, a cloak over his head but his dark hands revealing through his robes. Hiccup stepped down from Toothless, who wouldn't back away from Hiccup one foot. Jack

stood on top of Toothless, knowing no one else could see him but Hiccup and Toothless. Hiccup stepped forward to the mysterious dragon rider, speaking to him in a calm manner. "I am the Chief of Berk. I am Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III, son of Stoick the Vast. What brings you here to Berk?"

The dark robed figure looked at Hiccup with bright yellow eyes, staring at Hiccup as if he were a bug that needed to be squashed quickly. "A war has been called against the dragon riders of Berk from the High Lands kingdom," the figure's voice spoke raspy. A wave of gasps flooded through the tribe, whispering soon following after. Hiccup looked confused, but never backed down from his stance. "And who is this ruler of the High Lands kingdom?" Jack Frost looked at this dark figure as if he looked familiar, but couldn't lay his finger upon whom it might be. The raspy voice spoke once again, as Jack's face went from confusion to fear.

"Fergus Dunbroch of the Dunbroch clan." Jack looked at Hiccup and shook his head, but Hiccup spoke loud and clear for the dragon rider and the tribe to hear. "Then I will go to this Fergus Dunbroch and set things right. I will stop a war from happening, and I will make sure no villager, viking, or dragon get harmed." The dragon rider went back to his dragon and flew away mysteriously. Hiccup climbed up on Toothless and pushed Jack aside.

"Hiccup, trust me, you don't want to do this." Jack knew the consequences of Merida and Hiccup meeting once again, and Jack had to do everything in his power to stop him from going to Fergus. Hiccup took off on Toothless and looked over at Jack, pride in his eyes. "A viking protects his own."

### 3. Chapter 2: Braids and Reunions

The sun shined bright through the blond's window, her hair glowing as her mother plaited her hair gently while she sang. Being the princess of Corona was a big deal for Rapunzel, after all Jack had helped her find her true parents. "There, all finished." The queen of Corona tied the hair ribbon at the bottom of Rapunzel's braid, the princess standing up and twirling around her mirror as she admired her hair.

"It's beautiful, mother. Thank you!" Her spirit delighted the queen, and the young princess ran over to her mother and gave her a gentle hug. The queen smiled down at her daughter, brushing away a loose hair from her forehead. "Now, don't be late for breakfast, Rapunzel. I will give you fifteen minutes, alright?" Her mother placed her soft lips on the princess' head before walking out of the bedroom. Rapunzel gave a long sigh, and smiled after her mother. Her life had finally been complete after she found out who she really was, and Gothel was no longer around. Rapunzel skipped over to her wardrobe, trying to find the perfect dress for herself to wear during the day when something frozen touched her shoulder.

A smile appeared on her lips. "I've been waiting for you, Jack." She slowly turned around, but noticed the fear in Jack's eyes as she did so. She cupped his face in her hands and she spoke to him softly. "What's the matter? What's happened?"

Jack searched Rapunzel's face, sighing hard and breathing deeply, for

his fear was getting the best of him. "I don't know the best way to tell you this, Rapunzel." He closed his eyes, took a deep breath, and looked into her grass green eyes. "A war has been called between Berk and the High Lands." Rapunzel gasped, her hands covering over her mouth as she shook her head.

"But.. How? Who?" Her voice was soft, but her worry was disguised in her voice. She ran her hands over her braid that now hung over her shoulder, trying to puzzle the pieces together. Jack explained everything to Rapunzel, how the dark figure came to Berk and declared the war. Rapunzel's eyes grew wide, and she looked at Jack with fear in her eyes. Only one word escaped her tiny lips as she spoke to him.

"Pitch."

Jack got up and walked away from Rapunzel and smacked himself in the head with his staff. "How could I be so naive? I knew that person looked familiar!" He was beating himself up at the fact that it was Pitch the whole time. How could he be so stupid? Rapunzel grabbed his staff from him and threw it on the ground, cupping his face with her hands and kissing him lightly on the lips. She looked into his icy blue eyes, full of sincerity and care. "We will stop this, Jack. We will do what we can to stop this war." She rested her head against his chest and she wrapped her arms around him, holding his cold body close to hers. Jack sighed, put his hands on her shoulders and pulled her away, staring into her eyes.

"We need to go before this war begins." And just like that, Rapunzel left a note on her bed for her parents. She and Jack flew on his staff to the High Lands to stop a war from beginning.

#### 4. Chapter 4: Confrontations and Sadness

"Angus, come here an' eat an apple." Merida sat in the grass over looking the mountains, her hair blowing in the wind and her horse trotted over to her. She smiled up at him as he reached his head down and ate the apple out of her hand. Her hand softly brushed on the horse's muzzle. She sighed, falling back and landing in the grass as her horse laid beside her. "Isn' this wonderful, Angus? Just layin' out here, not a care in the world." She closed her eyes for a split second and sadness immediately followed her, her eyes opening quickly. The only thing that came out of closing her eyes was that dark face and his wicked smile. She sat up again, running her fingers through her red locks and gripping tightly onto them, letting out a small scream. Her eyes fluttered towards the sky, and suddenly went wide.

In the sky above her, was an outline of a creature that wasn't so hard to recognize. His wings spread in the air, and part of his tail was red. Her heart fluttered, beating so fast her breathing couldn't catch up with it. "Can it be?" She whispered to herself. "Angus!" The horse stood up and Merida jumped upon the horse, pointing towards the shadow in the sky. "Follow him!" She yelled, Angus using all his strength to run in pace with the creature above him. Her eyes dripped wetness down her cheeks, and at that moment, she didn't care. Her eyes stayed on the figure above her, noticing it's decent onto the ground in front of her. They were a mile away from Dunbroch castle, and a thought ran through her mind. War. She took in a deep breath

and stopped Angus at that mile mark, and stood next to him. She used her sleeve on her dress to clean the wet spots off her face. The figure above made it's way to the ground directly in front of her, and the dragon's eyes lit up with excitement. Merida's eyes noticed the dragon, but stayed on it's rider. The dragon rider hopped off the dragon and stood next to him, taking his mask off slowly and brushing his hair before looking up at the princess. Her breathing stopped as well as her heart. \_Woah\_, she thought to herself. These years have been good to Hiccup. He was more mature, had more muscle, his peg leg was newly improved, and only one word escaped softly from her lips.

"Hiccup."

He looked at her with his bright green eyes, shaking his head a little and looking at her with confusion. "Do.. Do I know you?" He spoke softly, his reaction changing her appearance. She remembered that night, that he won't remember her, and that he will despise her. She felt the emptiness inside of her once more, and then took a deep breath. "No," she spoke softly. "A'least, ye shouldn't." Her sentence was a meer whisper, to where she thought only she could hear, but Hiccup had heard it. "Shouldn't?" He spoke again, moving a little closer to her. She closed her eyes and stared at him, her Scottish accent thick. "What brings ye here, dragon rider?"

Hiccup looked at her confused again. \_She knew my name a second ago, now it's dragon rider?\_ So far, his visit wasn't making sense. He brushed off his confusion and spoke to the woman in a clear tone. "I'm here to speak to Fergus Dunbroom?" Merida rolled her eyes and shook her head. "Dun\*\*broch\*\*," she spoke to Hiccup gently. She crossed her arms and stared at the rider. "Why must ye speak to me father?"

\_She's the princess?!\_ Hiccups eyes went wide for a split second, clearing his throat he spoke to her once more. "I, uh, sorry, uhm, princess. I would like to speak to your father, Fergus Dunbroch, because I heard he was to declare war on my island, Berk." The princess looked at the young Chief confused. She thought for a moment and then looked at him with pride. "Follow me to my castle, ye will be able to speak to my father there." Merida hopped on her horse as Hiccup hopped on his dragon, the princess leading them towards her castle. She was nervous. \_What did he mean by war?\_ It puzzled her. Wouldn't her father discuss war with her present?

They had reached the castle and Merida hopped off her horse, pulling him towards the stables as she looked over at Hiccup. "Yer dragon should stay in th' stables. I don' think anyone is goin' to take kindly to yer dragon." He looked over at Toothless and spoke gently. "Well, go on bud. I won't be long." Toothless pounced over toward the stables as rubbed up against Merida, her hand lightly brushing against his head as she whispered so softly only the dragon was able to hear. "It's good to see ye too, Toothless." She sighed softly, walking away from the dragon and towards his rider, leading him to the castle. Hiccup stared at the princess briefly.

"You know he doesn't do so kind to strangers, I don't know if I could figure out why he's so comfortable around you." Merida blushed lightly, running her hand through her wild red hair and looked ahead as they entered through the doors. "Maybe he senses I'm a good person or somethin'." Her Scottish accent really captivated Hiccup's ears.

He couldn't figure out why he felt like he should know this princess, or why her voice was special in his ears. His thoughts were interrupted when she yelled for her parents.

"Mother! Father! This is important!" Her mother walked down the stairs slowly and laid eyes upon the dragon rider. Her eyes flickered between Merida and the boy, her voice speaking ever so softly that it reminded Hiccup of his own mother. "Merida, who is this boy?" Her mother was at the bottom of the stairs before she went over to her chair, sitting politely as her daughter brought Hiccup over. "Mum, this is-

"Go on boys! I'll tell ye the story later of Mordu! I know it's one of ye favorites, but-" Her father stood at the top of the stairs, looking down at the boy beside his only daughter. "Well now," her brawny father walked down the stairs as quick as he could with his peg leg and walked over to his daughter and the boy. Hiccup's eyes looked at Fergus' leg and then to his face. His brawn reminded Hiccup of his father's. Must be a Scottish thing, he thought to himself. "Who is this strapping youn' man with me daughter?" Fergus spoke, crossing his arms over his chest.

"Father I-

"Fergus, please sit down. Ye've been doin' enough runnin' around all day. Ye need yer rest." Elinor spoke to her husband in a heartily but serious manner. Fergus turned around and sat down next to his wife, looking at the young man and then to his daughter. "Why, have ye finally found a suitor for yerself, Merida?" Merida and Hiccup both shook their heads and hands and said a few no's, their faces both red from embarrassment. Hiccup slowly walked over to them.

"I am Hiccup Horendous Haddock III, son of Stoick the Vast and young Chief of Berk." Fergus' eyes lit up. He had known Stoick from a long time ago so listened to his son speak. "It was brought to my attention today on my island from another dragon rider, that you have declared a war against my island and your land, because of our dragons." Fergus and Elinor both looked at each other with confusion, both of them turning their heads back to the young Chief.

"We were told ye delcared war against our land because ye didn't like the fact we didn't have dragons." Elinor spoke softly to the boy, Merida's face full of confusion. She wanted to know what exactly was going on. "A dark person came to our home here an' told us ye were goin' to bring the war to us without preparation." The queen had spoken politely to Hiccup, who looked at the princess and then looked back at the king and queen. "This, dark person.. What exactly did he look like? Can you remember?"

Elinor looked worried as her husband spoke. "He was dark. Ye couldn't see his face, only his eyes. Yellow, I believe. An' he had dark hands. I don' know if he was wearin' gloves or if those were his hands." Merida looked at her parents and then at Hiccup, who spoke abruptly. "That was the same person who came to my island." Merida's thoughts all circled together. A war? Dark figure? Yellow eyes? Dark hands? Her head shook as she looked at her parents.

"What do we know of this 'dark figure'? He coul've been anyone! Maybe he was just startin' a war because there isn't one now." She was standing between her parents and Hiccup as she spoke, looking between



both of them. "Did this dark figure ever say who he was?" She spoke to Hiccup, but her head and eyes flickered back and forth between him and her parents. Hiccup shook his head slightly. "No, he never did. But he had a dark voice. Kind of raspy but he was mysterious."

It then hit Merida.

Dark figure. Dark voice. Only one person who was dark and had a dark voice.

Pitch Black.

Merida stared at Hiccup, who looked confused as well as her parents, and she shook her head, running out of the castle and outside into the air. She looked around, searching for the one person she knew who could help her.

\_This is impossible.\_ Merida gripped her hair once more and was about to scream when a pair of soft, small hands gripped at her wrist and pulled her hands out of her locks.

"It's okay," the princess of Corona spoke. "We're here."

## 5. Chapter 4: Comfort and Goodbyes

Jack stood next to Rapunzel and she tried to calm Merida down. "Come on, before he sees us." Merida spoke softly, leading them over to the stables. Toothless saw Jack and Rapunzel and pounced over to them, Rapunzel giggling slightly and petting him gently on the head. "It's Pitch's doin'. I know it is. He came to my parents an' to Hiccup's island." She shook her head, kicking a stable and making Angus freak out a bit. She grabbed her horse and rubbed his muzzle, calming him down and sighing heavily.

"Pitch wants a war. He always did. This is the only way he knows how to get a war started. Isn't that what he wanted from you and Hiccup a long time ago?" Jack looked over at Merida, who was starting into Angus' stable while her thoughts ran wild. She sighed heavily, nodding and turning to look at her two friends. "Ay, it is. An' that's what makes me angry." She looked toward the castle and saw Hiccup coming. Jack turned and looked as well, looking at Rapunzel and grabbing her by the waist.

"We'll stay close. You figure out what's going on." Jack spoke and flew away as Rapunzel waved to her friend. Merida watched them fly away and sighed. Toothless bumped into her, looking at her with friendly eyes and it made her smile. "A'least you remember me," she spoke softly to the Night Fury, rubbing his scales on his head. Hiccup slowly walked into the stables and Toothless jumped over to him, rubbing up against him. "Hey, bud," he smiled softly to his pet and then looked at the princess, who didn't seem pleased to see him.

"Well, everything is settled between your parents and I. It doesn't seem like we're going to have a war anytime soon." He walked slowly over to the princess who nodded at his words and pet her horse. She avoided eye contact as much as she could with him as Hiccup saddled himself onto his dragon. "Well, I guess my work here is done." Something inside of her broke into pieces. She forced a smile on her

face as she turned to look at the young man he had become. Hiccup wasn't a boy anymore, just like Merida wasn't a girl. They were both a young man and a young woman now. She nodded her head to him as he spoke.

"It was a pleasure to see ye Hiccup Horendous Haddock III, son o' Stoick the Vast, young Chief o' Berk." She teased to him, a smile coming over his lips and a small laugh. "It was nice seeing, uh, meeting you, uh, princess Merida, uhm, Dunbroch." Something inside of Hiccup made him want to smile at Merida constantly, and when he smiled, she did, and it made him want to smile more. He pet his dragon and looked down at him. "C'mon, bud, time to go home." Toothless walked over to Merida and rubbed his head against her hand, and she rubbed his scales softly. Hiccup looked down at the princess as she looked up at him, a smile coming over both of their lips. He placed his mask over his face and in a flash, he was gone.

Merida walked out of the stables and watched their shadows fly away into the high noon sun. Her heart beat was faint in her ears. That was the last time she believed she'd ever see him again.

An hour or so later Rapunzel and Jack had returned to the stables. Rapunzel looked around until she spotted her friend, her red hair covering almost her whole body as her head rested against her arms on her knees. The princess of Corona sat next to the redhead, brushing her fingers through her hair for support as Jack stood there, not knowing what to do. Merida slowly lifted her head up, her eyes as red as her hair and her face damp from the water that flushed from her eyes. She looked up at Jack and then to her princess friend, slowly turning her head to look down at the ground below her. "This is all too much for me t' handle." Her voice broke, and her accent was faint. Rapunzel put her arms around Merida, the wild hair resting on her friend's shoulder.

"We're here for you, Merida." She spoke softly into Merida's hair as a few more tears ran out of her eyes. Merida moved for a second, wiped off her face and stood up, brushing off her dress. She looked at Jack and then Rapunzel, who stood up right after she did. "We need to find Pitch an' stop him." Jack shook his head, leaning on his staff. "And how are we supposed to do that, Red?"

Merida grabbed her arrows from Angus' stable, putting them over her shoulder and grabbing her bow. She turned and looked at her two friends with pride and determination in her eyes.

"Our way."

End  
file.